

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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AL 1. A component management system comprising:

storage unit which stores a plurality of components related to hardware and firmware which are necessary for the development, manufacture, and inspection of a product as a component data base, wherein said hardware and said firmware constituting said product are at the same management level;

a server which manages the component data base stored in said storage unit; and

at least one client, connected to said server via a network, which takes out a predetermined component from said storage unit via said network.

2. A component management device comprising:

storage unit which stores a plurality of components related to hardware and firmware which are necessary for the development, manufacture, and inspection of a product as a component data base, wherein said hardware and said firmware constituting said product are at the same management level; and

management unit which manages the component data base stored in said storage unit and which provides a control when a client takes out a predetermined component from said storage unit via a network.

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3. The component management device according to claim 2,
wherein said plurality of components constitute a hierarchical
structure and said storage unit stores meta-information
expressing the hierarchical structure and said client takes out
5 a desired component from said plurality of components
constituting the hierarchical structure based on the meta-
information.

4. The component management device according to claim 2,
10 wherein the meta-information comprises taking-out limiting
information related to the permission/non-permission of
taking-out for each component, and wherein said client takes
out the applicable component based on the taking-out limiting
information only when said client gets the permission.

5. The component management device according to claim 2,
wherein said component comprises patch information for
automatically performing a patch processing to a firmware, and
wherein said client performs the patch processing to the
15 applicable firmware based on the patch information.

6. The component management device according to claim 2,
wherein said client retrieves a desired component from among
said plurality of components based on the meta-information.

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7. The component management device according to claim 2, wherein said management unit sends a notice of revision to said client via said network when a component already stored in said storage unit is revised and sends a notice of new registration to said client via said network when a new component is registered in said storage unit, and wherein said client takes out said component at an arbitrary timing after said client receives the notice of revision or the notice of new registration.

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8. The component management device according to claim 2, wherein said management unit conducts communications related to the development consignment of said product with a development maker side client placed in an external development maker and connected thereto via said network.

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9. The component management device according to claim 2, wherein said management unit conducts communications for getting the permission of quotation of a catalog of parts constituting said product with an author side client placed in the author side of the catalog and registers the catalog as a data base in said storage unit when it gets the permission.

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10. A computer-readable recording medium for recording a component management program for making a computer execute the steps of:

storing in a storage unit a plurality of components
5 related to hardware and firmware which are necessary for the development, manufacture, inspection, and the like of a product as a component data base, wherein said hardware and said firmware constituting said product are at the same management level; and

10 managing the component data base stored in said storage unit and providing a control when a client takes out a predetermined component from said storage unit via a network.

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